

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for withdrawing the rejections of record in the March 18, 2003 Office Action.

Status of the Application

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-9 and 11-21 are all the claims pending in the Application, as claims 6 and 10 are hereby cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 4, 6, 10 and 21 have been rejected.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 1, 2, 5 and 14-16 are allowed.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 7-9, 11-13 and 17-20 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicants hereby rewrite claims 7, 9, 11, 12, 17, 18 and 20 in independent form (claims 8, 13 and 19 depend from allowable claims 7, 12 and 18 respectively). Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 7-9, 11-13 and 17-20 are immediately allowable.

Indefiniteness Rejection

The Examiner has rejected claims 4 and 21 as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The informalities noted by the Examiner have been corrected. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Anticipation Rejection

The Examiner has rejected claims 6 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hagiwara (US 6,297,871 B1). Claims 6 and 10 are hereby cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, this rejection is moot.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-9 and 11-21 are allowable. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the application now is in condition for allowance with all of the claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-9 and 11-21.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any fees which may be required to maintain the pendency of this application, except for the Issue Fee, to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: March 5, 2004